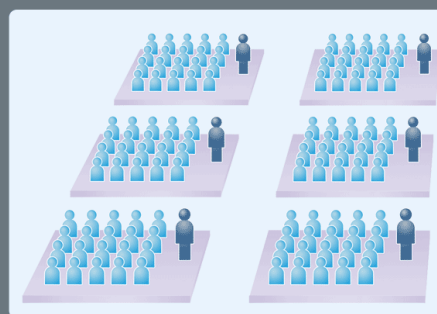


Our school is part of a community, called iZone360, which is reimagining the traditional school model in order to address the needs, strengths, and motivations of each student.



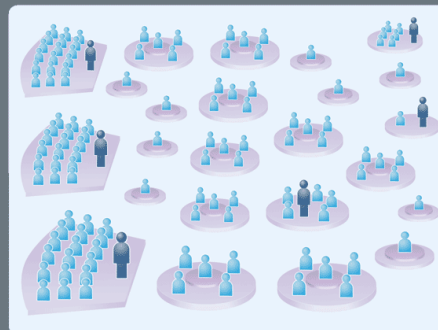
Why We Need to Innovate

Our aim is to increase personalized learning at TSMS. Although our students have historically been successful with state assessments, we know that there is more to education than what can be assessed on the state exam. We are moving toward innovation that will support our students in developing their self-awareness of themselves as learners. Working closely in partnership with our committed staff and utilizing the strong foundation of academic and social-emotional learning already in place, we hope to provide a structure in which students of all styles and backgrounds can gain the skills and confidence they will need in later life.



A New Approach to School

There are a number of structures at TSMS that we feel could be reconfigured to more efficiently serve the needs of our students and families. First and foremost is further developing a new system of assessment that students and families can use to understand discrete learning goals for each class. Secondly, our schedule must be redesigned in order to better serve students' learning needs by building in flexible time for coaching and small groups into the school day. Thirdly, we would like to redevelop our curriculum to address the individualized, cross-disciplinary outcomes and varied modalities that are becoming illuminated as a result of the previous two initiatives.



How can we reimagine and transform curriculum and assessment to help all students meet or exceed the Common Core Standards and other rigorous academic standards?

We, as a learning community, have a say in defining what we believe contributes to the long-term success of children. Defining what we value and making those values as public as possible is crucial to institutional success. By offering an alternative, in-depth measure of student progress across developed curriculums, we can inject another perspective into the conversation about education. Outcomes assessment based on Common Core Standards and the rich and personalized data that we gather from it, along with a schedule that allows for flexible groupings of students and staff members, will lead to student success across rigorous standards.



How do curriculum and assessments need to change to prepare students for dynamic and demanding colleges, careers, and communities?

The more cross-curricular the planning, with the greatest amount of differentiation available for students of all learning styles, the more success we have seen students have. This success has been deepened by the vast amount of individual learning data that we have begun receiving from outcomes-based assessment. To truly prepare students, curriculum and assessments must be flexible enough to keep up with the evolving student body and all of the personalized information that can now be available to educators. We have long found at TSMS that heterogeneous groupings of students, mixed academically, socio-economically, ethnically, culturally, religiously, etc., provides a foundation for future success that is difficult to replicate in any other venue.



iZone360

The use of outcomes-based assessment provides a detailed picture of each student as a learner. Our school community is excited about the insight and targeted instruction that is starting to emerge from this initiative. Next year, we will be introducing a Flex Time period during the school day in which each student can meet with a staff coach to craft a learning plan that addresses the areas of need. We will also be using the data from JumpRope to create targeted small group instruction during the Flex Time period.



In addition to Advisory and Flex Time conferencing, lunch meetings, and pre-/post-school time, our robust use of JumpRope, an online assessment tool, has expanded student access to on-demand detailed information on individual learning progress. Students (and families) can log on at any time to explore an in-depth interactive report on their child's progress toward mastery based on every skill that makes up each unit in all subject areas.

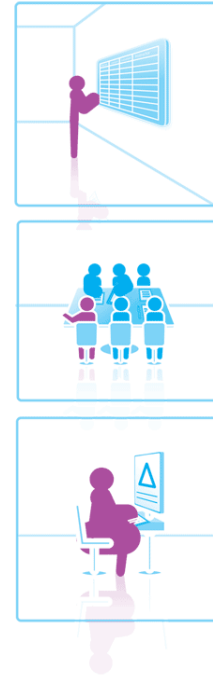
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New Student and Staff Roles

iZone360

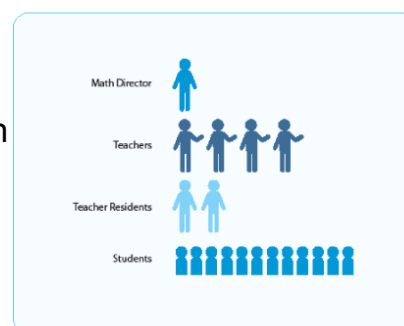
How will students take ownership of their learning and learn how to work in a variety of live and virtual settings?

At the end of three years at TSMS, students will be able to talk about learning outcomes (for example, engaging in the authentic practices of experts in the field) in a meaningful way and be able to identify and demonstrate ways that they're best able to reach those outcomes. Students will spend more time conferring around outcomes and more time reflecting on their own learning, utilizing more online learning for skill acquisition tasks or interactive language/math acquisition while teachers are freed up for facilitating project based small group work and coaching.



How will staff take on new, flexible roles as coaches and facilitators to guide student learning? How can alternative staffing models help meet each student's needs?

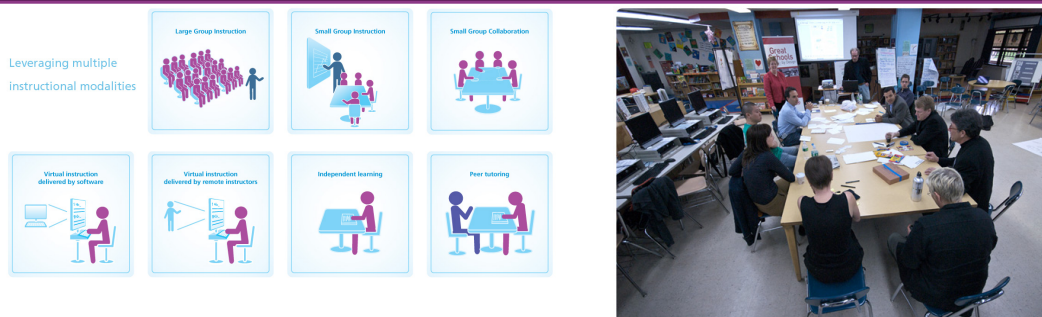
With the introduction of OBA, teachers are now reflecting more fully on what they're asking students to do, and the implications for their curricular and instructional work with students, which is already leading to meaningful conversations about how students learn, how students are grouped, how the schedule functions, and how it might change in response to student needs. More time will be spent conferring around competencies, and there are more conversations with kids around their own learning. Every staff member will be working closely with small groups of students during Flex Time and Advisory, enriching relationships around learning progress and changing the way student needs get met.



Flexible & Real-World Learning Environments

iZone360

How can we create flexible and real-world learning environments by re-imagining our use of technology, scheduling, and community/home resources?



WHAT WE DID IN YEAR ONE:

Adopt and implement a mastery-based assessment platform that is flexible and transparent enough for all the major constituents (students, parents, teachers, administration) to use effectively.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT YEAR:

Redesign the school schedule to be flexible enough to encompass the needs and learning styles of different learners as well as to provide the common planning time staff will need to sustain these different approaches.

WHY WE'LL DO THIS:

- To adjust our schedule to best support students' individual learning needs
- To create a more precise picture of student learning with a schedule that allows for tailoring of education for individual/groups of students
- To use our Year 1 successes as a launching pad for figuring out how to successfully structure a student's day based on his/her learning profile

WHAT WE'LL DO IN YEAR THREE:

Adapt our current curriculum to reflect what we have learned from data from JumpRope and our new Flex Time periods as well as incorporate models of blended learning.

A SAMPLE OF ILEARN NYC ONLINE PROGRAMS WE'LL BE USING, HOW, AND WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THEM:

- We are planning on using Powerspeak with 180 of our students, with a focus on our 6th grade students. We are hoping by using Powerspeak that we will soon be able to expand the number of languages that we can offer.
- We are also planning on using e-portfolio in 8th grade science. Last year the 8th grade students used google docs to present their exit lab. We are hoping that e-portfolio will be a more effective platform for this.

Some links to some of our students' online creations:

- 21st Century Book Clubs: Using Social Networks to Explore and Extend the Power of Literature <http://goo.gl/qJ5Fy>
- TSMS Reads! <https://sites.google.com/a/tsmsonline.org/reads/>
- Our 8th Grade Science Fair: <https://sites.google.com/a/tsmsonline.org/grade8sciencefair2011/home>

A Day in the Life

iZone360

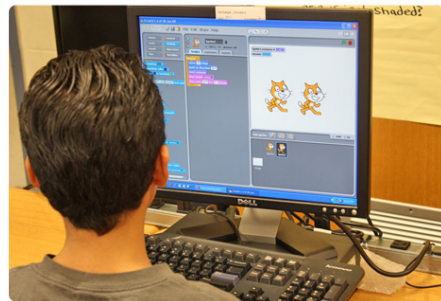
Students arrive at school for Advisory check-in, grounding them in a small-group community for the day ahead. Teachers begin their day 10 minutes prior with a daily all-staff morning meeting, a grounding pedagogical community experience.



Multiple venues across the school facility provide different learning environments during the day's instruction, including the dance studio, science lab, tech lab, art room, and the new roof garden.



With our expanded collection of classroom laptops, flexible groups of students will be able to focus on self-selected, differentiated instruction.



Interdisciplinary, deep level thinking tasks, along with a daily Flex Time period built around one-on-one coaching and targeted small group instruction, challenge and nurture early adolescents throughout the day.



A robust after-school program, complete with sports teams, performing and visual arts, and homework help with our teachers, finishes the afternoon.

